

Assembly Bill No. 1505

CHAPTER 397

An act to add Section 711.1 to the Military and Veterans Code, relating to veterans.

[Approved by Governor September 20, 2012. Filed with
Secretary of State September 20, 2012.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1505, Pan. Department of Veterans Affairs: veterans' benefits: reinstatement.

Existing law establishes the Department of Veterans Affairs, which is responsible for administering various programs and services for the benefit of veterans.

This bill would provide that if the federal government acts to reinstate benefits to discharged veterans, as specified, who were denied those benefits solely on the basis of sexual orientation pursuant to any federal policy prohibiting homosexual personnel from serving in the Armed Forces of the United States, the state shall reinstate to those veterans any state-offered benefits, as provided.

This bill would require the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide Internet resources, Internet links, and print materials, as provided, regarding, or created by, veterans' legal services organizations that specialize in military discharge upgrades.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) It is the intent of the Legislature to extend fair and equal treatment with regard to the administration of veterans' services and programs to California's veteran population regardless of sexual orientation.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature to respond to any federal reinstatement of benefits for discharged veterans, regardless of their discharge status, who were denied those benefits because of any federal policy prohibiting homosexual personnel from serving in the United States Armed Forces, by reinstating state-offered benefits for the same veterans.

SEC. 2. Section 711.1 is added to the Military and Veterans Code, to read:

711.1. (a) If the federal government acts to reinstate benefits to discharged veterans, regardless of their discharge classification, who were denied those benefits solely on the basis of sexual orientation pursuant to any federal policy prohibiting homosexual personnel from serving in the

Armed Forces of the United States, the state shall reinstate to those veterans any state-offered benefits they were denied due to those federal policies.

(b) To the extent practicable, the department shall do the following:

(1) On the department's Internet Web site, provide Internet resources or links to Internet resources that provide information regarding veterans' legal services organizations that specialize in military discharge upgrades.

(2) In the department's offices and walk-in locations, provide printed resources, to the extent available, created by veterans' legal services organizations that specialize in military discharge upgrades.